

access to a gun and misusing it. As in other approaches to safe gun use, training and education are paramount, so each individual owner can develop a strategy for the safe storage and use of their firearm. "Firearm Personalization Technology" assists in doing just this, and if the marketplace responds favorably to these innovations, gun technology will change.

My bill simply allows the gun industry an enhanced opportunity to accelerate work in this field, and to explore whether or not consumers will respond favorably to safe, reliable and practical innovations in gun technology.

Naturally this type of innovation research is not inexpensive. As Members are aware, the industry has been under enormous economic stress, due largely to the anti-gun policies of the current Administration and to frivolous law suits being filed against the industry by anti-gun interests. Precious resources the industry could be devoting to technological innovation have been used to defend its lawful and responsible businesses. Perhaps this credit will help the industry get back into the business of developing better products, instead of having to devote its resources to defending the lawful manufacture, sale, and use of its products.

In order to encourage this technology, my legislation has an additional provision which exempts that part of the firearm which is enhanced or added and devoted solely to the addition of Firearm Personalization Technology, from the federal excise tax on firearms. For example, if a firearm normally costs \$500, and \$500 worth of electronic components are added to the firearm for Firearm Personalization Technology, the \$500 enhancement would be exempt from the federal excise tax. A \$50 savings on a \$1,000 gun may not seem much at first glance, but as many in the industry will tell you, guns are very price-sensitive commodities, for which consumers make a decision to buy or not to buy, based on surprisingly small price differences.

In closing, let me say, Mr. Speaker, while there are certainly obvious sharp divisions in this Chamber on private firearms ownership in our country, I believe my colleagues on both sides of the aisle should be able to support improvements in gun technology which are voluntarily pursued by the manufacturing community, with little rather than more government involvement. Allowing market forces to determine innovation in the field, is the natural and correct way progress ought to occur.

DATABASE PROTECTION

HON. DAVID L. HOBSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my support for an important issue that will require the full attention of Congress in the coming year—database protection. While I am disappointed that consensus could not be reached this year on legislation to protect the right of individuals and organizations to protect their databases from the outright theft of their products, I am hopeful that the 107th Congress will act expeditiously on this issue when it convenes in January. A database anti-piracy law is an imperative for an information society

that is growing ever more dependent on the Internet and on the information available in electronic databases.

Companies that compile the complex information for these databases put a tremendous amount of work into developing an accurate, understandable resource bank for private or public use. This is a lengthy, expensive, and ongoing process that deserves to be protected. Individuals, companies, and organizations that work hard to compile information for the benefit of their consumers should be protected under our laws. It is not acceptable to allow a "data pirate" to steal the product of someone else's hard work and profit from it, while causing the original compiler market harm. Our nation's intellectual property laws have long recognized the importance of rewarding work with legal protection, and this is one area where the law needs to be improved to keep up with advances in technology unforeseen by earlier generations of lawmakers.

In the district I represent, the consequences of inaction are very real. I have a background in small business and real estate, so I know that importance of this legislation. From the local realtor to the database company that employs thousands in my state, not acting to provide legal recourse to the victims of data piracy, significantly affects jobs and commerce in Central Ohio.

I am concerned that without legislation to protect their databases, there is no incentive to devote time, capital, and resources to the creation and maintenance of dependable and accurate databases. People from all walks of life utilize these databases everyday for information on medicine to information on real estate. Society will be severely affected if these information systems cease to exist. Without legislation to protect them, the lack of incentives for creating and maintaining databases of accurate information will eventually lead to the non-production of these important data compilations.

In the next Congress, we can develop legislation that will protect database producers and still allow consumers the same access to the free flow of information for legitimate purposes. Developing sound legislation on database anti-piracy will be a top priority for me in the 107th Congress. I look forward to working with Mr. COBLE, Chairman of the Judiciary Courts and Intellectual Property Subcommittee, the Commerce Committee, and the House Leadership on this important issue.

AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 24, 2000

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Chairman LEACH and Mr. LAZIO, and my colleagues on the House Banking Committee for their tireless work on moving legislation that brings some much-needed reforms to the overall housing industry. S. 1452 will enhance home ownership throughout the country.

Furthermore, I am pleased to see that many provisions of H.R. 1776, the Housing and Eco-

nomics Opportunity Act, have been included in the S. 1452. As my colleagues may remember, H.R. 1776 passed our chamber earlier in the year by an overwhelming and bipartisan vote of 417 to 8. However, there is one particular omission that concerns me. Unfortunately, this omission may ultimately have an impact on the number of families who will realize the American Dream of homeownership.

The provision that has been omitted from S. 1452 is Section 102 of H.R. 1776. Section 102 requires that the Federal government perform a housing impact analysis before it issues new regulations. The impact analysis would determine if a significant negative impact on affordable housing would result from those new regulations. "Significant" would be defined as increasing consumers' cost of housing by more than \$100,000,000 per year.

Further, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1776 stipulates that the private sector would have an opportunity to submit an alternative to the proposed regulation if it would have less of a negative impact on the cost of homeownership. As with the other provisions in Title I of H.R. 1776, the goal of the housing impact analysis is to alert federal agencies and the general public of the impact of regulation on housing affordability.

Ultimately, the objective would be to help bring down the cost of a home by minimizing regulations that pose a barrier to homeownership. The housing impact analysis addresses this issue by requiring the Federal government to perform an "internal check" of sorts in a quest to see if the regulation might be constructed in a better way that would not lock some individuals out of homeownership.

I see this internal check as a positive action, Mr. Speaker, and I am concerned that this worthy provision, a provision 417 of my colleagues supported, was left out of the legislation that comes before us today. I hope that this concept does not die with the closing of the 106th Congress, but is reviewed again next year, with the commencement of the 107th.

RECENT VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of Congress a recent letter from United States military leaders regarding the recent violence in the Middle East. The letter follows:

We, the undersigned, believe that during the current upheavals in Israel, the Israel Defense Forces have exercised remarkable restraint in the face of lethal violence orchestrated by the leadership of a Palestinian Authority that deliberately pushes civilians and young people to the front lines.

We are appalled by the Palestinian political and military leadership that teaches children the mechanics of war while filling their heads with hate. We are appalled by Palestinian "military commanders" who place armed adults amid civilian rioters, including children, and then callously use the inevitable casualties as grist for their propaganda mill. The behavior of those Palestinians, who use civilians as soldiers in a war, is a perversion of military ethics.

What makes the US-Israel security relationship one of mutual benefit is the combination of military capabilities and shared

political values—freedom, democracy, personal liberty and the rule of law. Yitzhak Rabin said at the beginning of this peace effort with the Palestinians that one can only make peace with one's enemies. But the enemy must have decided to put down his weapons—rocks as well as rifles—and make peace in good faith. The Palestinian-initiated violence in Israel now strongly tells us that the necessary good faith is sorely lacking on the Palestinian side.

America's responsibility as a friend to Israel, the only country in the Middle East that shares our democratic and humanitarian values, should never yield to America's role as facilitator in this process. Friends don't leave friends on the battlefield.

Lt. Gen. Marcus Anderson, USAF (ret.), Inspector General, US Air Force.

Lt. Gen. Robert Baer, USA (ret.), Deputy Commander, Army Materiel Command.

Maj. Gen. Max Baratz, USAR (ret.), Commander, US Army Reserve.

Lt. Gen. Jared Bates, USA (ret.), Inspector General, US Army.

R. Adm. Charles Beers, USN (ret.), Commander, Submarine Group Ten.

Lt. Gen. Arthur C. Blades, USMC (ret.), Deputy for Plans, Policies, and Ops.

Lt. Gen. Anthony Burshnick, USAF (ret.), Commander, Military Airlift Command.

Adm. James Busey, USN (ret.), CINC, US Navy Europe.

Lt. Gen. Paul Cerjan, USA (ret.), Deputy Allied Commander, Europe.

Adm. Hank Chiles, USN (ret.), Commander in Chief, US Strategic Command.

Gen. J.B. Davis, USAF (ret.), CoS, Supreme HQ Allied Powers Europe.

Adm. Bruce DeMars, USN (ret.), Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

Maj. Gen. Lee Downer, USAF (ret.), Director of Operations, Air Combat Command.

Adm. Leon Edney, USN (ret.), Commander, US Atlantic Fleet.

Gen. John Foss, USA (ret.), Commanding General, Training and Doctrine Command.

Maj. Gen. Donald Gardner, USMC (ret.), Commander, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

Maj. Gen. William Garrison, USA (ret.), Commander, Joint Special Operations Command.

Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, USA (ret.), Assistant Vice Chief of Staff.

Maj. Gen. David Grange, USA (ret.), Dir., Army Operations, Readiness & Mobilization.

Lt. Gen. Tom Griffin, USA (ret.), Chief of Staff, Allied Forces Southern Europe.

Gen. Alfred Hansen, USAF (ret.), Commander, USAF Logistics Command.

Adm. Jerome Johnson, USN (ret.), Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

V. Adm. Dennis Jones, USN (ret.), Deputy CINC, US Strategic Command.

V. Adm. Bernard Kauderer, USN (ret.), Commander, Submarine Forces, Atlantic Fleet.

R. Adm. Herbert C. Kaler, USN (ret.), Dir., Joint Theater Air and Missile Defense Org.

V. Adm. Anthony Less, USN (ret.), Commander, Naval Air Forces, US Atlantic Fleet.

Maj. Gen. Jarvis Lynch, USMC (ret.), Commander, Eastern Marine Recruiting Depot.

Lt. Gen. Charles May, USAF (ret.), Assistant Vice Chief of Staff, USAF.

Maj. Gen. James McCombs, USAF (ret.), Deputy CINC, US Special Operations Command.

R. Adm. William F. Merlin, USCG (ret.), Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District.

Maj. Gen. William C. Moore, USA (ret.), Director, Operations, Readiness & Mobilization.

Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson, USAF (ret.), Commanding General, 23rd Air Force.

V. Adm. James Perkins, USN (ret.), Deputy CINC, US Southern Command.

Lt. Gen. Everett Pratt, USAF (ret.), Vice Commander, US Air Forces Europe.

Maj. Gen. Milnor Roberts, USA (ret.), Deputy Chief, US Army Reserve.

R. Adm. Norman Saunders, USCG (ret.), Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District.

Maj. Gen. Sidney Shachnow, USA (ret.), Commander, JFK Special Warfare School.

R. Adm. Sumner Shapiro, USN (ret.), Director, Naval Intelligence.

Adm. Leighton Smith, USN (ret.), Commander, US Forces, Southern Europe.

Maj. Gen. Larry Taylor, USMCR (ret.), Commander, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing.

Adm. Carlisle A.H. Trost, USN (ret.), Chief of Naval Operations.

V. Adm. Jerry Tuttle, USN (ret.), Director, Space and Electronic Warfare.

Brig. Gen. Thomas E. White, USA (ret.), Exec. to the Chairman of the JCS.

R. Adm. Guy Zeller, USN (ret.), Dir., Surface Warfare, OPNAV.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 24, 2000

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 782, to reauthorize the Older Americans Act.

I would like to begin by recognizing Chairman GOODLING and Ranking Member CLAY for all of their hard work in producing this legislation. Mr. CLAY will be missed in this chamber next year.

I also would like to extend my deep appreciation to Subcommittee Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Democrat TIERNEY for their dedication to our older Americans.

Although I believe that this legislation is flawed and still has several problems, it is an important bill and Congress can no longer allow the important programs served under the OAA to continue without authorization.

Unfortunately, this bill contains new formulas for funding which, in the coming years, could shift vitally needed resources away from Northeastern urban areas such as my home of New York City.

Like with the funding formulas used by the VA, the Government tries to allocate resources based on new population data, neglecting the needs of those who need the most care.

But while this bill has several problems—problems I hope will be worked out in a bipartisan way by the Congress next year, this bill also contains a number of important new programs as well.

This legislation establishes a \$125 million caregiver program. This creation will help thousands of New York families be able to provide for their loved ones in their later years. I salute this new program.

Additionally, the Committee included a hold harmless provision for nutrition programs such as the Meals and Wheels program, which benefits so many of my older constituents, particularly in such places like Mitchell-Linden in my District.

This legislation also toughens up the language on a top concern of mine—elder abuse. Although I did not have the opportunity to amend this legislation with provisions from my

bill, the Elderly Protection Act (H.R. 1984), to provide for Federal background checks of employed caregivers or assistance to train new caregivers to identify signs of domestic abuse, I am pleased at the new language.

This bill increases the severity of committing crimes such as fraud and exploitation of the elderly—an all too common occurrence in our country.

In my district, Father Coleman Costello of Walk the Walk is establishing a new and innovative center to provide for the abused elderly and provide treatment for their abusers. While this bill could have gone further to address this hidden crime, it does make positive steps.

I ask welcome the language regarding the senior jobs program in Title V of the OAA. Our senior need jobs, but we must ensure that these jobs are in their communities and serving their needs as well as the needs of the elderly in their neighborhoods.

All in all, with the problems notwithstanding, I will vote to support this legislation as it will provide some new funding streams to New York City as well as reauthorize a number of key programs under the Older Americans Act.

Stating that, it is my hope that Congress can revisit some of the questionable provisions of this bill in the 107th Congress so that all older Americans can fully benefit from the Older Americans Act.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 835, ESTUARIES AND CLEAN WATERS ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 25, 2000

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of S. 835, the Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000. This landmark legislation will enhance our ability to protect the nation's valuable shoreline habitats, extend the cooperative partnership to preserve the Chesapeake Bay and Long Island Sound, and expand the effort to improve water quality in our nation's lakes.

Estuaries are some of the most valuable natural resources of the nation, but they are also vulnerable and many are collapsing. This important measure promotes the restoration of one million acres of estuary habitat throughout the country by directing \$275 million in funding and other incentives to local estuary protection projects.

Estuaries are the bays, gulfs, sounds, and inlets where fresh water from rivers and streams meets and mixes with salt water from the ocean. These areas represent some of the most environmentally and economically productive habitats in the world.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 75 percent of fish and shellfish caught in the United States by commercial fishing operations depend on estuaries for survival. Moreover, these habitats—river deltas, sea grass meadows, forest wetlands, shellfish beds, marshes, and beaches—support a large number of endangered or threatened species of plants and wildlife.

These areas are fragile and vulnerable to human and environmental pressures. Growing